

VZCZCXRO5115
OO RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0916 3031804
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 301804Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0484
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 2407
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 0443
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2118
RUEHMT/AMCONSUL MONTREAL 0423
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 1484
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 000916

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR S, C, WHA/CAR, DRL, S/CRS,
INL FOR KEVIN BROWN, HEATHER WILD AND MEAGAN MCBRIDE
INR/IAA
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER PIERRE LOUIS OUSTED AFTER
TUMULTUOUS SENATE DEBATE

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: At midnight on October 29, the Senate ousted Prime Minister Pierre Louis, who refused to appear at the interpellation session. 18 Senators out of 29 gave Pierre Louis a vote of no confidence, after opposition Senators had left the session in the expectation that a vote could no longer be held. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) In response to a convocation from the President of the Senate, Prime Minister Pierre Louis addressed a letter to the Senate early afternoon on October 29, stating she would not be appearing in front of the Senate given she felt 'a decision had already been made' to remove her. Opposition senators who had not previously supported Pierre Louis rallied to oppose the interpellation on procedural grounds, making the process far more drawn out than many expected. Opposition senators, including Youri Latortue, Evalliere Beauplan, Rudy Heriveaux and Andris Riche, attempted to stall the session. Latortue argued the convocation was illegal because the Lower Chamber was in recess and that Parliament was limited to the agenda of its extraordinary session set by President Preval.

¶3. (U) The LESPWA majority remained relatively quiet throughout the debate, instead letting Senator Joseph Lambert (LESPWA, an ally of Preval) present an unimpressive response to the technical objections of the opposition. The debates, transmitted live on television and radio stations from 12:00 until 1:00 in the morning, were very heated; at one point, Latortue requested those Senators bearing arms to leave their weapons in their car outside, to which newly elected LESPWA Senator John Joel Joseph complied (Joseph is widely rumored to have been involved in kidnappings, so no one was surprised to see he was armed.)

¶3. (U) Around midnight, opposition senators left the session in the hope that the vote would no longer be valid after midnight (arguing that a new day requires a new agenda). Taking the opportunity, Senator Lambert proposed the resolution censuring the Prime Minister. 18 Senators (representing LESPWA and allies) voted for the resolution. Nine senators did not cast a vote, and one abstained (Senate President Kely Bastien did not participate in the vote, as per Senate internal rules).

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT. During the 10 hour Senate session, Prime

Minister Pierre Louis' record was hardly discussed, leading many observers to conclude that she was not removed for performance. President Preval is expected to name a new Prime Minister in the next few days. Preval has told us that Jean Max Bellerive, current Minister of Plan and a competent technocrat, is his first pick. Both houses must vote on the new Prime Minister, his slate of ministers and his proposed platform, things that may take time to negotiate as Preval does not have a majority in the Lower Chamber as he does in the Senate.

MERTEN